



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Lava Beds National
Monument

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Lava Beds National Monument News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Lava Beds National Monument Plans Two Prescribed Fires

Lava Beds National Monument plans to ignite the Crescent Butte and the Valentine Prescribed Fires during the last two weeks of October if conditions are favorable. These prescribed fires will cover 2,295 acres in the southern portion of the Monument. The units are primarily shrubs and juniper woodlands with scattered Ponderosa pine. The Crescent burn unit was last treated with prescribed fire in 1985. The Valentine burn unit experienced a wildfire in 1941. Since the natural cycle of lightning-caused fire in these ecosystems is between 20 and 50 years, prescribed fire will mimic this cycle.

Lava Beds National Monument develops a smoke management plan which is approved by the local air district before implementing the project. Ignitions will not be conducted on No-burn days in Siskiyou County without appropriate approval. Wind direction and smoke dispersal are integral components of the decision to initiate the prescribed fire.

These prescribed burns will be located near the campground and Visitor Center. Closures may be in place for the campground "B" loop, Valentine Cave, and temporary road closures for public safety.

Superintendent Dave Kruse stated, "Reducing brush under existing large Ponderosa pines will provide protection from the effects of future fires. Reducing brush in other areas will allow pine stands to expand into areas where they previously existed."

Fire Management Officer Syndy Zerr added, "The policy of using fire as a tool will help decrease risks to life, property and resources and help perpetuate the resource values for which Lava Beds National Monument was established."

As with every prescribed fire, The Crescent Butte and Valentine Prescribed Fires will be ignited only when sufficient firefighting resources are in place and weather conditions are favorable enough to give firefighters the upper hand in containing them within designated areas. Superintendent Dave Kruse stated, "During all of these operations public and firefighter safety is the number one consideration in everything we do."

For additional information, call Lava Beds' Fire Management Officer at 530-667-8122.

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